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## Nothing Compares to Duxbury

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We are part of history, if only we can find a way to relate to events and to other people to show it. Living a small town has given me a wonderful opportunity to feel connected.

When my parents moved to Duxbury in 1949 they called themselves the "forty-niners" along with their good friends, the Jimmie Jamesons.

I liked the house, but the streets had no sidewalks; the schools were very small; we had a grocery store right next door! The life style was very foreign to me, having come from Newton and Wellesley Hills. There are curbstones, huge school systems, streetlights, stoplights, and police directing traffic.

The day my youngest son, Bob, came home from school soaking wet, I wondered! He

had dived into Blue Fish River on his way home. This new way of living was becoming more and more interesting.

The four of us, Nancy, Ted, Bing, and I moved down to Duxbury one family at a time, following the lead of Mama and Dad. Each of us bunked in with them until we found our own housing. The big house had plenty of room and was always full. The top floor was usually reserved for family. We could see Provincetown from the bathroom window. What a blessed new life.

There was a fire escape from my oldest son, Jay's room onto the roof of the porch below. I found out later that it came in quite handy for him on several occasions. Sometimes a boy needs an out! Another fun thing: we could drop all of our laundry down the

semi-circular staircase. Of course one of us had to pick it up and carry it to the machine.

We had Bible studies, DAR meetings, New Year's Day open houses, Dad's Barber-shop Quartets and many wonderful gatherings regularly. The Lord truly blessed all those who entered. On Mother's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday, my son Bruce had a cake made with a coat of armor and a lady (mother) on top of the cake. We all remember the armor by the front door.

When we were all "launched" — either married or remarried — Madeline and Ted took guests. People liked to stay at "The Leonard's." Dad made wonderful breakfasts. Mama used her best china — different each morning, including goblets Grandma had collected from her trips with Ruth Web Lee,

the expert and author on glass. I overheard an older guest, who had "moved in" to 479 Washington Street say on the phone, "I'm between Heaven and Hell, I'm at the Leonard's."

Dad had purchased the greenhouse from St. John's Church and had it attached to the house, even with a cellar under it. He made an ingenious apparatus to open and close windows. It operated by a thermostat he invented and installed himself. We always had fresh flowers. He used to make boutonnieres and corsages for our special occasions. They were gorgeous.

The moment the night-blooming Cereus opened, he telephones all of us to come to a "Night-Blooming-Cereus Party." It was always held on the huge porch overlooking Duxbury Bay.

We saved every *Clipper*, returning most of them to the *Clipper* office. With Mama and Dad gone, we thought it would have pleased them that the house be open to everyone. This dream came true when the Duxbury Rural & Historical Society bought our beloved house. The company, owned by my son Stephen supplied the wood to Walpole Woodworkers for the new fence. A coincidence?

We, Clifford and I, have been living in Maine and Florida for 12 years, but nothing compares with Duxbury. We couldn't stay away any longer, so we're back for summers, in a tiny house on Elm Street. We have Bible studies there, too, every Tuesday from June to October. You are all welcome, just call.